AN: This is a monster of a story, at way over 4,000 words, so I'll keep things brief and simply say that this is very tense! Enjoy!

Poison

New Deal

Moto sighed, taking a puff from his joint and standing on the balcony of his apartment. He gazed out at the horizon, which consisted of an enormous ocean that seemed to go on for ever. It was a wonderful view. A view that cost a lot of money to live near.

Luckily, he had what he needed.

The cub discarded his cigarette and watched the waves with red-rimmed eyes, unable to do anything else. He was lucky enough to have smuggled his drugs into the apartment, what with HPD watching him and all. He was paranoid that he would be arrested within seconds if he tried to do anything.

I need something to, like, do, he thought, resting his head on the cool metal barrier that enclosed the balcony. *It's so… boring – and stuff.*

He ached for company. Things just hadn't been the same since the parties in the jungle had ended. It had been weeks since Moto had been able to relax and unwind with a few friends, taking drugs and perhaps engaging in a bout or two of sexual activity… That was his idea of a night well spent.

However, those days were over for the cub. Death's Sumu empire had crumbled, leaving only a pile of ashes. No more drug dealing for him, and that meant no more drugs for his customers. Moto had barely been able to salvage his private stash; the police were investigating everything around the burnt lab within a ten-mile radius. He'd been lucky.

And then they found him anyway. Someone must have

suspected him of being a dealer. After all, he had a reputation of hanging around with them. Not that he minded; it often resulted in him maybe getting a discount or two. His personal favourite friend was Sarafina, who had pleased him in more ways than one…

Ah… Sarafina, Moto thought dreamily, a smile forming on his face. *Just the pussy I need right now.*

The cub stood there for quite some time, basking in his high and dreaming of greater pleasures.

"I wish you'd stop jerking us off," Bora said, finding himself once again in an interrogation room with the elusive TPYMK. "It's about time that you gave us some straight answers instead of talking in riddles."

"I asked for a glass of water," TPYMK responded, staring at the lion in disbelief.

"What's that code for?" Bora asked. "Are your gang-bangers about to drop in on a wire and shoot everyone in the building?"

"How on earth did you get your job?" TPYMK wondered. It was a genuine question.

"Hard work," Bora said. "And the more criminals like you I take down, the better it is for my rep."

"You know I'm not a criminal," TPYMK said. "I agreed to testify against Moto, didn't I?"

The former detective neglected to mention that he was also planning on murdering Moto later tonight. Once he found out his location, it would only be a matter of time before the cub was poisoned, reducing the chances of Sarafina being sent to jail for dealing drugs under Death's employment. She didn't need this, and he was going to do everything in his power to make sure that she stayed out of jail.

"What do you know about Moto, then?" Bora questioned,

narrowing his eyes at TPYMK. "You haven't been too specific."

"He wasn't the specific type," TPYMK said, glad that he was finally able to reveal more information about the cub. Sarafina had spoken in as much detail as possible of what Moto was like, so now he knew pretty much everything about him. More than he would have liked to know, as a matter of fact. "You know what these people are like. Wastes of space."

Bora chuckled. "And how did you meet him?"

"I observed him," TPYMK said, "while I was investigating Death's drug empire."

"And did you see him dealing drugs?" Bora asked. "Did you get it on tape? Because, if you did, then this would go a lot smoother for you."

"Unfortunately not," TPYMK said. "Carrying equipment like that only would have made things more awkward for me; I tried to remain discreet."

"Interesting," Bora said, nodding. "Well, since we don't have any hard concrete evidence here, I suppose we'll just have to take your word for it."

"He deserved to go to jail," TPYMK said. "You won't believe how many people this piece of filth sold drugs to. I saw him dealing to kids, for Christ's sake."

This was, of course, a lie. It was Sarafina who had been dealing to kids, and TPYMK was simply spinning the story to make it look like Moto was the culprit. Out of the two, TPYMK's word was more likely to sound like the truth than his. It would hold up better in court, if things came to that, although he doubted they would.

"Kids?" Bora raised his eyebrow. "Jesus… These dealers will do anything to make money."

"I'd have him locked up as soon as possible," TPYMK advised,

even though he knew full well that Moto would be dead by tomorrow morning. If things went smoothly, of course. "He's a threat to the city. Hell, maybe even the world."

"We'll follow up on it," Bora told him. "See if any of his customers remember him. Something ought to turn up."

"Good," TPYMK nodded. "So… can I go now?"

Bora stared at TPYMK for a good ten seconds. "Yeah. You can go. Guess you've gotta hurry back to Mrs Screw-Me for another 'cleaning' session, huh?"

The lion smiled at TPYMK, as if inciting him to retaliate with some kind of violent response.

However, the former detective simply smiled, looking as cool as a cucumber. He didn't look affected in the least.

"See you soon," TPYMK said, rising from his chair.

"I'm sure I will," Bora replied, watching as TPYMK strode out of the interrogation room, quietly shutting the door behind him.

"Jerkoff," Bora remarked under his breath. "What the hell are you hiding?"

TPYMK knew his way around the police station, having been there more than a few times in his life. He was interested in finding the records department, since it would almost certainly have a file on Moto. He had to know where the cub currently resided; it was of the utmost importance if his plan were to succeed.

The former detective hurried through a doorway and down a metallic staircase, looking over his shoulder to make sure that he wasn't being followed. He wasn't worried about the other officers – to them, he looked like just another detective – but Bora was certainly a problem. If he caught him snooping around, then he would find himself arrested within seconds.

TPYMK pushed open a door at the bottom of the staircase, walking through a crowded office space. Cubicles were scattered all around on either side of him, manned by various animals who were all hard at work, speaking on telephones or typing up paperwork.

He walked straight through the middle of the chaotic workplace, focused on a metal doorway at the other end. A little sign next to the door read 'Records Department' in plain black lettering.

Now I've got you, TPYMK thought.

"Got anything new?" Askari said as he bumped into Bora in the corridor just outside the interrogation room.

"Huh?" Bora said. "Ah, I'll tell you later. Hey, do we have a file on TPYMK lying around anywhere?"

Askari shrugged. "In the records department, probably."

"Thanks," Bora said, before hurrying down the corridor.

TPYMK closed the door behind him, staring at the numerous rows of enormous file cabinets stood before him. Sarafina had told him that Moto's last name was Habari, so it would be easier to find him without having to look through all the cabinets.

He hugged the wall, spotting a security camera in the corner of the room. It swivelled mechanically from left to right, carefully surveying the area.

TPYMK sneaked up on the camera and pulled out one of the wires, disabling it. That made his job a lot easier.

The former detective immediately walked down the 'H' row, ripping open the first drawer he saw. He began to sift through the files, looking for any sign of Moto's name. He wanted to read the file, find the cub's current whereabouts and then return it before anyone even knew that he was there.

Bora walked briskly through the office space, eager to reach the records department at the opposite end of the room. He was just about sick and tired of TPYMK's mysteriousness, so it was about time that he got some answers on just who he was.

"Hey, Bora," said a female voice from one of the desks.

Bora turned to the sound of the voice, which belonged to a female hornbill. "Oh, hey, Maarifa," he said. "What's up?"

"Nothing much," she replied. "Just finished filing some more evidence on the Death case. They've barely managed to salvage a few bags of Sumu."

"Anything on the other suspect?" Bora asked. He knew that someone had helped TPYMK in burning the lab down; he just didn't know who.

"Nah," Maarifa said. "The forensics team are going nuts on trying to figure out those paw prints. They're thinking they were too big to belong to a female."

"Well, that just narrows it down," Bora remarked bitterly. "Anyway, I've gotta go. See ya round."

"Bye," Maarifa called, as Bora continued towards the records department.

There you are, you little rat.

TPYMK pulled out the Moto file, quickly opening it up. A picture of the cub in question had been fastened to the file with a paperclip. The former detective wasn't interested in his appearance, however. He simply wanted to know where he lived.

He quickly found out what he was looking for: '66 Pride Lands Street'.

TPYMK knew the place; it was an apartment complex close to the sea. Although how Moto had been able to afford such a

residence, he had no idea. He couldn't deny that he thought something was odd about it – but he had more important things to worry about right now.

TPYMK quickly returned the file, slamming the drawer shut.

And that was when Bora entered the room.

Whistling to himself, Bora casually strode past the row of filing cabinets.

Reacting quickly, TPYMK immediately ducked behind one of them, keeping as much distance between him and the detective as possible.

Damn it, TPYMK thought. *Why do things always have to be so difficult?*

He listened carefully as Bora, who was unaware of his presence, pulled open one of the drawers and started looking through the files inside.

TPYMK stared at the wall opposite, wondering how he would be able to escape without Bora hearing him. He couldn't even see the door right now, since he was positioned at the other end of the room.

He craned his neck, peering around one of the filing cabinets in order to get a good look at Bora. He was still searching through the files.

What the hell is he looking for? TPYMK wondered, narrowing his eyes.

He quickly hid himself again when Bora directed a glance in his direction. He failed to spot him, though.

TPYMK racked his brains, desperately hoping that he could come up with some sort of idea in order to escape. It would only be a matter of time before Bora started searching the other rows; he would find him eventually.

He reached into the pocket of his trenchcoat, pulling out a handful of items: a pen, a Mickey Mouse keychain, and a small black ball.

Opting for the ball, TPYMK returned the other items to his pocket. He threw the ball straight at one of the filing cabinets. It bounced off the metallic surface with a loud *clang!*

Bora looked in the direction of the noise, his senses instantly on full alert. "Hey! Is someone there?"

The lion walked off in the opposite direction of TPYMK, allowing him an excellent opportunity to make a run for it.

The former detective quickly scarpered from the room, closing the door behind him as quietly as he possible could.

TPYMK smiled as he walked back through the office space.

66 Pride Lands Street.

He had what he needed.

"Did you get it?" Sarafina asked, getting up from the sofa as TPYMK walked into the house.

"Yes, I got it," TPYMK said, entering the living room.

"You've been gone for hours," Sarafina said, staring up at him. "Jesus Christ, where were you?"

"Ran into a little bit of trouble," TPYMK said, "but I did it. There's nothing to worry about."

"So, uh, where's the file?" she asked. That was why TPYMK had gone there in the first place.

TPYMK narrowed his eyes at her. "Sarafina, why on earth would I steal police property and bring it back here? What, do you think they wouldn't notice it was missing? That would only raise more questions."

"Then how do you know the address?" she asked.

TPYMK tapped his forehead. "I memorised it," he said. "I know your memory has been erased after months of drug use, so you don't have the concept of—"

"Stop being a jerkoff and just tell me the address," Sarafina interrupted.

"66 Pride Lands Street," TPYMK recited. "It's an apartment complex not too far from here."

"Yeah – what apartment?" Sarafina said.

"It didn't say," TPYMK said, "but his name will be on the listing outside the front door. You'll find him."

"So… what do I do?" Sarafina said. She wasn't an expert on the art of poisoning drug users, so she felt that TPYMK at least could provide a little guidance.

"You were already told," TPYMK replied. He reached into his pocket, pulling out the bag of ricin. "You slip this into his food while he's not looking, make sure he eats it, and then get out as fast as you can."

"What if he doesn't cook anything?" Sarafina said.

"*You* cook something for him, then," TPYMK retorted, pointing at her.

"Me?" She placed both forepaws against her chest. "I don't know how to cook."

"Sarafina, it isn't too hard to grab a piece of cheese from the fridge, slap two pieces of bread on either side and make a sandwich," TPYMK said. "This is simple. You can do this. I have faith in you."

"Oh, that's a relief, then," she said, unable to hide the fact that she was shaking. "So, I'm just supposed to show up at his house and act like nothing's changed?"

"Be flirtatious," TPYMK said, sitting down on the sofa. "You're

good at that. He's a junkie; he isn't exactly going to ask any questions. He's probably gonna be stoned out of his mind when you turn up at his door."

Sarafina sighed, joining him on the sofa. "So when do we do it?"

"Tonight," TPYMK said. "We can't risk the HPD bringing Moto back in again. Sooner or later, he'll start talking about you."

"This had better work," Sarafina said. "I'm putting my butt on the line here."

"So am I," TPYMK said. "Do you have any idea what I went through to get that address? I was nearly caught by an officer."

"That's nothing," Sarafina sniffed. "I'm the one who has to kill him."

TPYMK stared into her eyes. "We do what we have to do."

Sarafina stared back. "Even if I don't like it?"

"That's the way it has to be."

"I expect you back here in two hours," TPYMK said, sat in the passenger seat of his car, or, as Sarafina liked to call it, the Junk-Mobile. The lioness was stood outside, leaning in through the window.

"Why don't you just drop me off outside his apartment?" Sarafina asked, looking down the street. The setting sun created a purple tint across the sky, making the ocean seem more beautiful than ever. "We're two blocks away."

"Because the HPD might be watching," TPYMK said. "And if that's the case, then do you really want them to see me? I am currently under investigation, Sarafina."

"Fine," she said. "Just don't go anywhere."

"I won't," TPYMK assured her. "I brought something to read."

He held up a book called *The Lion King Adventures.*

Sarafina snorted. "Who the hell's gonna read something like that?"

"Shut up," TPYMK said. "Have you got the ricin?"

Sarafina opened her jaws, revealing the bag of ricin, which had been carefully taped to the roof of her mouth. "Yeah. Hope I don't swallow it."

"If you do, then that's it," TPYMK said. "No coming back."

"Well, that just fills me full of confidence," Sarafina said.

"Just get out of here."

"And a warm goodbye to you, too," Sarafina retorted, scowling as she walked off down the street.

"Hey! Sarafina!"

Sarafina smiled upon seeing Moto. It was a false smile, of course; she hadn't intended on crossing paths with him ever again.

The cub was holding the door of his apartment open, grinning happily at the sight of her. "Where've you been hiding?"

"I've just been… around," Sarafina shrugged. "Doing other stuff, you know? Thought I'd pay ya a visit, though. See what's going on."

"Come on," Moto said, beckoning for Sarafina to enter his apartment. She did so, glancing around the place. "Welcome to my crib!"

Moto's living room was normal enough. A few sofa and chairs were scattered around the place, with an adjacent kitchen. It was clean enough for the most part – except for the huge mound of marijuana piled up on one table.

It was enough to make her wrinkle her nose in disgust. She had

no intention of ever going near the stuff ever again. The same couldn't be said for Moto, though, who was a junkie through and through.

"Didn't think I'd ever see you again," Moto said, plopping down on a leather seat next to the pile of weed. "Want some dope? I got plenty to go around."

"No, thanks," Sarafina said, feeling very awkward. She sat down in a chair opposite the cub. "I've quit."

"You? Quit?" Moto laughed. "That's a joke, right? Come on – smoke one up!"

He offered a joint to her. Sarafina stared Moto in the eyes.

"I told you," she said firmly. "I've quit."

Moto rolled his eyes, lighting the joint. "Fine," he said, before popping it into his mouth. He breathed in a lungful of smoke, sighing in relaxation. "Ah… that's better. I'm feeling so stressed out these days."

"You are, huh?" asked Sarafina, raising an eyebrow. "About what?"

"I'm just trying to enjoy what I love, and the police keep on trying to take it all away from me," Moto said. "They think I'm a dealer. I just enjoy the stuff; I can't even be bothered to sell it."

"Yeah," Sarafina said. "Those cops suck, huh?"

"They suck *balls*, man," Moto said. "It's not like I'm hurting anyone."

Except for yourself, she thought to herself.

"You haven't seen anyone else from the jungle, then?" said Sarafina.

Moto took another puff from his joint, shaking his head. "Nah – they've all scrammed, dude," he said. "I've just been chilling out here." He pointed to the pile of marijuana. "This is all the

stuff I could scrape from my stash. I've got a couple bags of crystal upstairs, but I'm saving that for later."

"So, uh…" Sarafina shuffled nervously in her seat. "You got anything to eat or what?"

Moto chuckled. "Chill, girl," he said. "You only just got here. There's still plenty of fun to have before dinner."

"Huh?" Sarafina didn't quite understand. *I swear to God, if he tries to make me smoke any weed, then—*

"Am I tripping too hard, or are your toenails, like, purple?" Moto asked, giggling rather hysterically. His eyes looked quite red by now. "Wow – this is some weed."

Sarafina glanced down at her hind claws, which were indeed still a sickly purple colour. "Nah – it's the new look. Like it?"

Moto discarded his joint. He stumbled out of his seat, crawling towards Sarafina. "Oh, I like it," he said, leaning over the lioness and staring into her eyes. "It's sexy – just like the rest of you."

"Uh… thanks, I guess," Sarafina said, now feeling more awkward than ever. She could smell Moto's foul breath; it was unpleasant, to say the least. "So, uh, you wanna grab a sandwich or something?"

"I know something else I want to grab," Moto said, taking hold of Sarafina by the hips. He grinned at her. "What do you say?"

Sarafina rolled her eyes, knowing where this was going. "Oh, God, no."

"*Oh, God, yes!*"

Sarafina was panting as she rested her head against the bed. Moto rolled over onto the space beside her, the two of them having been engaging in a bout of intercourse.

"That was great," Moto gasped, snuggled up beside her. "You

still know how to do it, Sarafina."

"Yeah…" Sarafina breathed, her body still tingling all over. She had to admit, it felt pretty good. It had been a long time since she had enjoyed such activities. Still, she wasn't too happy that it had to be with a junkie. But if she was going to poison Moto, then he had to be able to trust her – and surely she had earned that trust now.

"Whoa… It's almost better than Sumu," Moto said.

Sarafina stared into his eyes. He had snorted some crystal meth prior to the sex, so he was still pretty intoxicated. Hopefully, he would be dopey enough for her to make him eat some food now.

"So, uh… how about that snack, huh?" Sarafina asked, stroking his chest with a paw.

"Yeah… I prefer to eat after sex," Moto told her. "And maybe I can eat *during* sex later." He winked at her.

Sarafina resisted the urge to throw up.

"They've got this new technology now," Moto told Sarafina as he punched some numbers into the kitchen microwave. "This microwave thing, like, *nukes* the food until you can eat it. That's gotta be worth a Nobel Prize or something."

"I think they've had that for a while," Sarafina muttered, drinking from a glass of water. Moto had tried to get her to indulge in some champagne, but she had no interest in either alcohol or drugs anymore. She didn't want to risk anything tipping her over the edge again. One relapse was enough.

"This is gonna be the best pasta ever," Moto said. "Screw restaurants – all you need is a microwave."

The microwave beeped a few times, signalling that the food had been cooked. Moto yanked open the microwave door and pulled out a plate of cheesy pasta, dumping it down on the tablemat

opposite Sarafina.

"So… what do you want?" Moto asked. "I've got fries."

"Yeah – fries are good," Sarafina said, waiting for the right opportunity to slip the ricin into Moto's plate. All he had to do was turn around…

"But these aren't just fries," Moto said, pulling open the freezer and rummaging through it. "They're, like, *curly*, yo…"

Acting quickly, Sarafina tore the bag of ricin from the roof of her mouth. With shaky paws, she emptied its contents into the pasta. She mashed them up with her claws for added effect, making sure that Moto wouldn't suspect a thing. Although, since he was high, he probably wouldn't figure it out anyway.

After five minutes, Moto had microwaved a box of curly fries for Sarafina. She ate casually from the box, watching as Moto sat down in the chair opposite. He picked up a fork from the table, grinning at his meal.

"It's time for cheesy heaven!" he exclaimed, digging his fork into the plate.

Sarafina's heart skipped a beat, waiting for him to start eating—

—but then the phone rang.

Moto looked up, dropping the fork.

Oh, no, Sarafina thought. *No, no, no, no, no… Just take a bite.*

"Looks like I've got a caller," Moto said with a grin, getting up from the table. "Be right back, babe."

Sarafina winced, watching as Moto picked up the phone from a nearby table. "Yo, yo, yo – this is Moto here! All pussies welcome!" His grin then faded away. "Oh… it's you."

The lioness watched carefully as Moto listened to the caller on the other end. "Yeah… I'll do that… Okay… Don't worry – I've got this handled… Okay… Later."

Moto ended the call, putting the phone down. "Sorry, man, but I'm gonna have to ask you to split."

Sarafina stood up from the table. "Why? Is there a… problem?"

"No," Moto laughed. "No problem. Just business stuff, that's all. Come back tomorrow and maybe we can try some more exotic food… like each other."

"Right," Sarafina said, as Moto led her towards the door. "I guess I'll see ya round, then."

"You bet!" Moto said, holding open the door for her. "See ya!"

The door slammed shut, and Sarafina found herself alone in the empty hallway.

Damn it! she thought, thumping the floor in anger with a paw. *Damn it, damn it, damn it!*

She leant against the wall, taking a deep breath. *Why couldn't he just eat the goddamn pasta? Why? He's gonna forget all about it now… I'm screwed. Totally screwed.*

Sarafina climbed back into the car, sitting down in the passenger seat. TPYMK stared at her. "Did you do it?"

Sarafina glared at him. "Really? Not a, 'How are you?' Not even a hello?"

"Just answer the question," TPYMK said sternly.

"Yeah," Sarafina said. "I did it."

TPYMK smiled. "Good," he said. "Thank you, Sarafina. Looks like that takes Moto out of the equation, then. If the police find him, his death is just gonna look like a drug overdose."

"So what now?" Sarafina asked, hoping to God that Moto had gone back and eaten the pasta. She doubted that was the case, however.

"We're free," TPYMK said. "There's no one left to connect you to

drug dealing, so now we can get on with our lives."

"Somehow, I doubt it's that simple," Sarafina muttered, staring out of the window as TPYMK started the car.

"We'll be fine," TPYMK said, driving off down the road. "Once I've checked that there aren't any other loose ends that need to be tied up."

"What?"

Moto was stood on the balcony once again, staring at the full moon as he smoked another joint. The sea below sparkled brightly, and it looked even more sparkly because of the drugs that Moto had been using that night.

"Careful," warned a voice from behind the cub. "You don't want to waste your entire stash."

Moto turned around to face another cub. She was female, though. "Oh, hey," he said. He offered his joint to her. "You want a hit?"

Her electric blue eyes sparkled at him. "No, thanks," she said, shaking her head. "I'm not a junkie."

"Sucks to be you," giggled Moto.

"We told you not to have any more contact with your old druggie friends," the cub warned. "The Family doesn't take kindly to this kind of behaviour."

"Hey – I agreed to deal drugs for you," Moto said. "And I'm keeping quiet to the police. Isn't that enough?"

"Know your place, Moto," said the cub. "If you want to make some real cash with us, then you'd better not upset us. The next time you invite a whore over again, we will break your legs and force them down your throat."

"Don't worry about it," Moto said, inhaling more smoke. "Got any other news?"

"Yes," the cub revealed. "I have a new deal for you."

AN: Phew – a lot happened in this story, didn't it? I think this is my favourite one yet. And it did get pretty adult… I apologise if anyone was offended, but this is an M-rated series, after all. Gotta be realistic, right?

Anyway, I hope you review, since there's a lot to speculate on! If not, I'll just see you for the next story!